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ARGON

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

USIB-D-41,15/19  
COMOR-D-48/48  
26 September 1963

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

MEMORANDUM FOR THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Need for Additional ARGON in 1963

1. The Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance has been briefed on the results of the last ARGON, 9058A, and, as a result of this briefing, in para 6 recommends another ARGON during 1963.

2. 9058A had no significant malfunction and both the stellar and the main camera worked exceptionally well. However, because 9058A was limited to a 4 day mission and because it encountered bad luck with weather, significant gaps requiring coverage still exist. These factors resulted in only 985 frames over land when there was less than 50% cloud cover.

3. The briefing clearly displayed the gaps remaining in ARGON coverage and described the need to fill these with a side lap of 30%. It should be emphasized that this need and the recommendation to use another ARGON this year are pertinent only to achieving adequate geodetic position to hit targets within the USSR and is not part of any comprehensive program to cover the world land mass.

4. Mission 9059A promises to be better than 9058A, since it is planned as a 5 day mission rather than a 4 day mission, thus providing a capability to employ the available film supply more selectively over land areas.

5. COMOR concludes that the task of establishing sufficient geodetic position to permit optimum accuracy against targets in the USSR has not yet been achieved and needs to be completed. The Secretary of Defense in emphasizing the short-term military need for geodetic position accuracy has also emphasized the longer-term requirement in observing that all reduction in the error in our accuracy equates to a general reduction in stockpile.

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6. COMOR recommends that 9059A be fired as presently scheduled, on or about 25 October.

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James Q. Reber  
Chairman  
Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

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